

## Appropriate Sources

While research often benefits from using a variety of sources, your professors may have certain requirements for the sources you use for an assignment with a particular interest in sources that are “scholarly” in nature. Below is a brief outline of the most common types of sources you might encounter in your research and whether those sources are typically considered scholarly.

Type of Source	Does this count as scholarly?	Advantages	Disadvantages	Best tool for finding this source
Books	Sometimes, but not always. Check the author’s background and whether there is evidence of research, such as references or footnotes.	Books contain in-depth information. Prior to publication, they go through an editorial process that helps ensure the quality of the information in them.	Books can take years to publish so they aren’t always a good source if your topic is relatively new. The editorial process isn’t always perfect. Books can also contain bias.	<a href="#">The library’s main search</a>
Peer-reviewed articles	Yes	These types of article are written by and for experts in a field about research studies they have conducted. The peer review process ensures that the research conducted is valid, original, and important.	Peer-reviewed articles can be difficult to understand for anyone who isn’t an expert in the field they are written. The peer review process is also imperfect for a variety of reasons.	Library databases such as <a href="#">Academic Search Complete</a> are the best place to find the full text of scholarly articles. Limit your search to “Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals” for the best results.
Magazine and newspaper articles	No. Though information in these sources can be considered credible, it is not scholarly.	These types of articles provide good commentary on a topic and are written for a general audience, so they’re generally easy to understand.	They tend to be very “of the moment” and may contain information that was later disproven.	Library databases such as <a href="#">Academic Search Complete</a> are the best place to find the full text of magazine and news articles. Limit your search by publication type for the best results.
Websites	No. However, websites can lead you to scholarly sources if you check for references.	They are easy to access and most people are used to using them.	You will need to put extra effort into evaluating a website to make sure it’s credible.	Google or a similar search engine.